

# Community Meeting

City of Punta Gorda, Florida

April 16, 2018

# Research Recap

## *Economic & Market Analysis*

- *Current economy*
- *Business growth*
- *Marketing Efforts*
- *Competition*
- *Communications*



# Research Recap

## Stakeholder Participation

### Key groups noted:

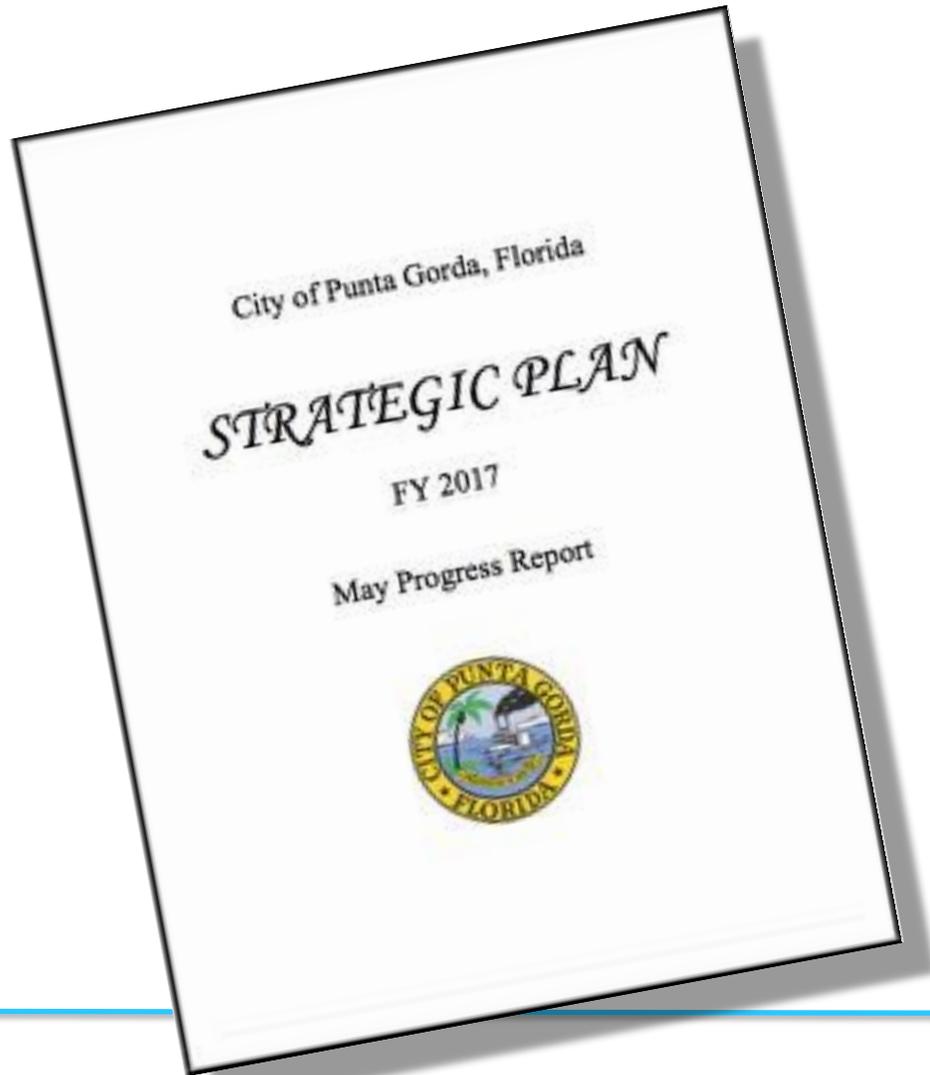
- *Team Punta Gorda*
- *The Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce*
- *One Community One Message (OCOM)*
- *Fishermen's Village Merchant's Association*
- *The Charlotte County Visitor & Convention Bureau*
- *The Charlotte County Econ. Dev. Partnership*
- *Enterprise Charlotte Economic Council (ECEC)*
- *The Punta Gorda Airport*
- *The Punta Gorda Downtown Merchants Association*
- *The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association*
- *Burnt Store Isles Association*
- *Bernice A. Russell Community Development Corporation*
- *The Seminole Lakes Homeowners Association*
- *Burnt Store Meadows Property Owners Association*
- *Visual Arts Center*
- *Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce*
- *Trabue Woods Economic Development Corporation*

- Online survey received over 442 responses
- Among the highest level of engagement

# Research Recap

## City of Punta Gorda 2017 Strategic Plan:

*“...identify [the city’s] brand and market its lifestyle and infrastructure qualities...”*



# Research Recap

## *Conclusions:*

- 1. Punta Gorda needs a consistent identity*
- 2. Essential focus on new business attraction*
- 3. Take steps to encourage appropriate economic growth*

# Research Recap

## *Conclusions:*



- 1. Punta Gorda needs a consistent identity*
  - Design and implementation of new city branding*

# Research Recap

## *Conclusions:*

2. *Essential focus on new business attraction*
  - *New Campaign targeting key markets*

# Research Recap

## *Conclusions:*

- 3. Take steps to encourage appropriate economic growth*

# Appropriate Growth Approach

- Majority of the city understands the importance of future growth.
- Majority favors steps to encourage economic growth.
- Legitimate concerns unchecked growth will change city character.
- City must take an active, leadership role to encourage “appropriate” growth.

# Appropriate Growth Approach

- City of Punta Gorda is at a critical decision point.
- The city must grow to survive.
- Sustained growth requires the city to take proactive leadership steps to encourage new investment.

1987 – Downtown West Palm Beach



# 1987 – Downtown West Palm Beach







A photograph of a large, illuminated sign for Cityplace at night. The sign is set on a blue base with white text. The background features palm trees and a building with lit windows.

**CITYPLACE**

**SHOPS & RESTAURANTS**



Apricot Lane

charlie

DINING

Blue street sign

charlie

**\$600 million retail and  
entertainment center**





**Today – Fort Myers Riverfront**



**Today – Fort Myers Riverfront**





## Luminary Hotel

- Signature restaurant
- Retail Space
- Street-level shops
- Amphitheater-band in Centennial Park





**City-owned**



**City Assembled**



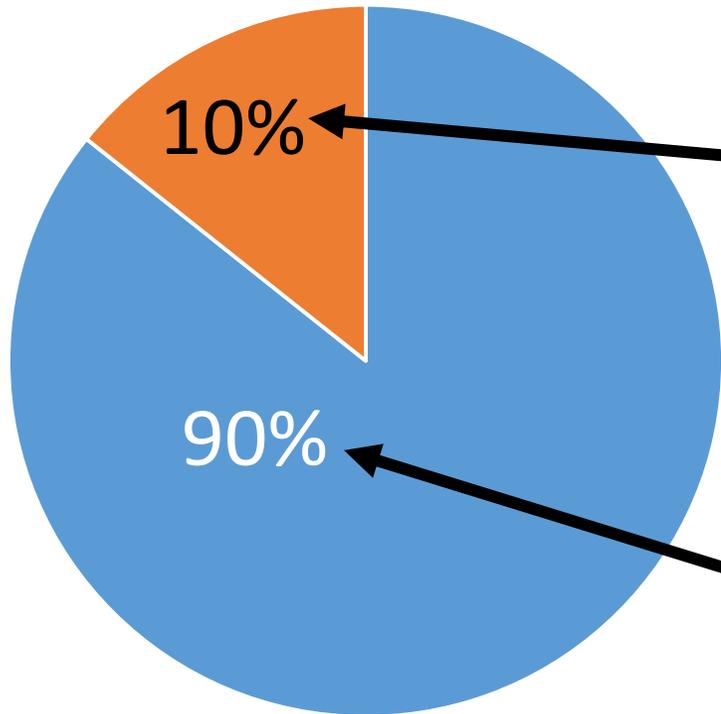
“Reinventing a city is a constant process. Cities that stay atop of the trends, and become economic development role models, generally have leaders that understand the importance of being progressive and on the cutting edge of society.”

Kim Briesmeister  
Redevelopment Management Associates

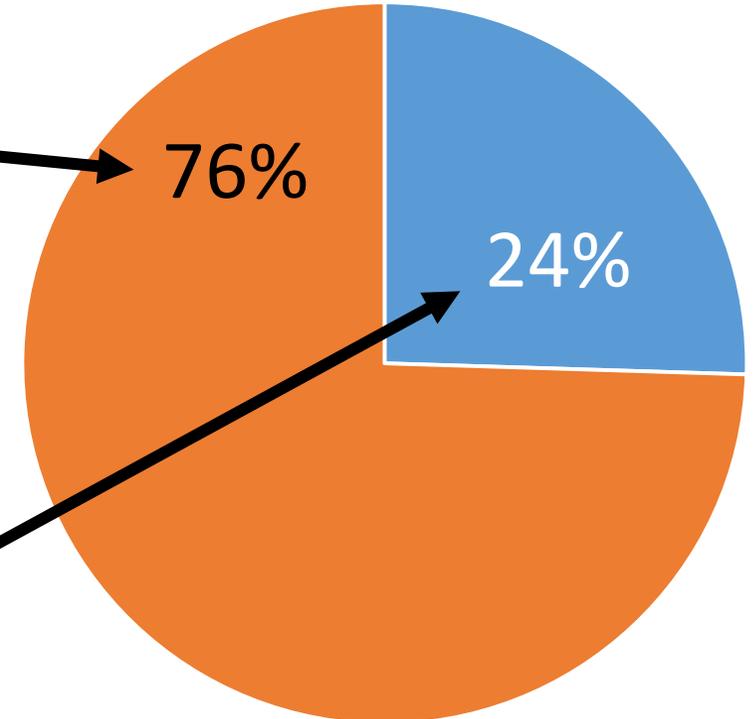
# Future Economic Growth Challenges

# Future Economic Growth Challenges

Punta Gorda



Florida\*



Commercial

Residential

# Future Economic Growth Challenges



3x

more dependent on residential  
property taxes to pay for city  
services



# Future Economic Growth Challenges

- 2015: First year millennials outnumbered Baby Boomers.
- But not here in Punta Gorda.
- Punta Gorda less diverse than average:
  - Majority 65+
  - Almost 90% White

# Future Economic Growth Challenges

☰ MENU

🔍 SEARCH

Kiplinger

STORE

DEALS

LOG IN

By THE EDITORS OF KIPLINGER'S PERSONAL FINANCE

November 10, 2017

**BEST CITIES, STATES & PLACES**

## Where to Retire in Florida

Some cities in the Sunshine State are better suited for retirees than others.

# Future Economic Growth Challenges

☰ MENU

🔍 SEARCH

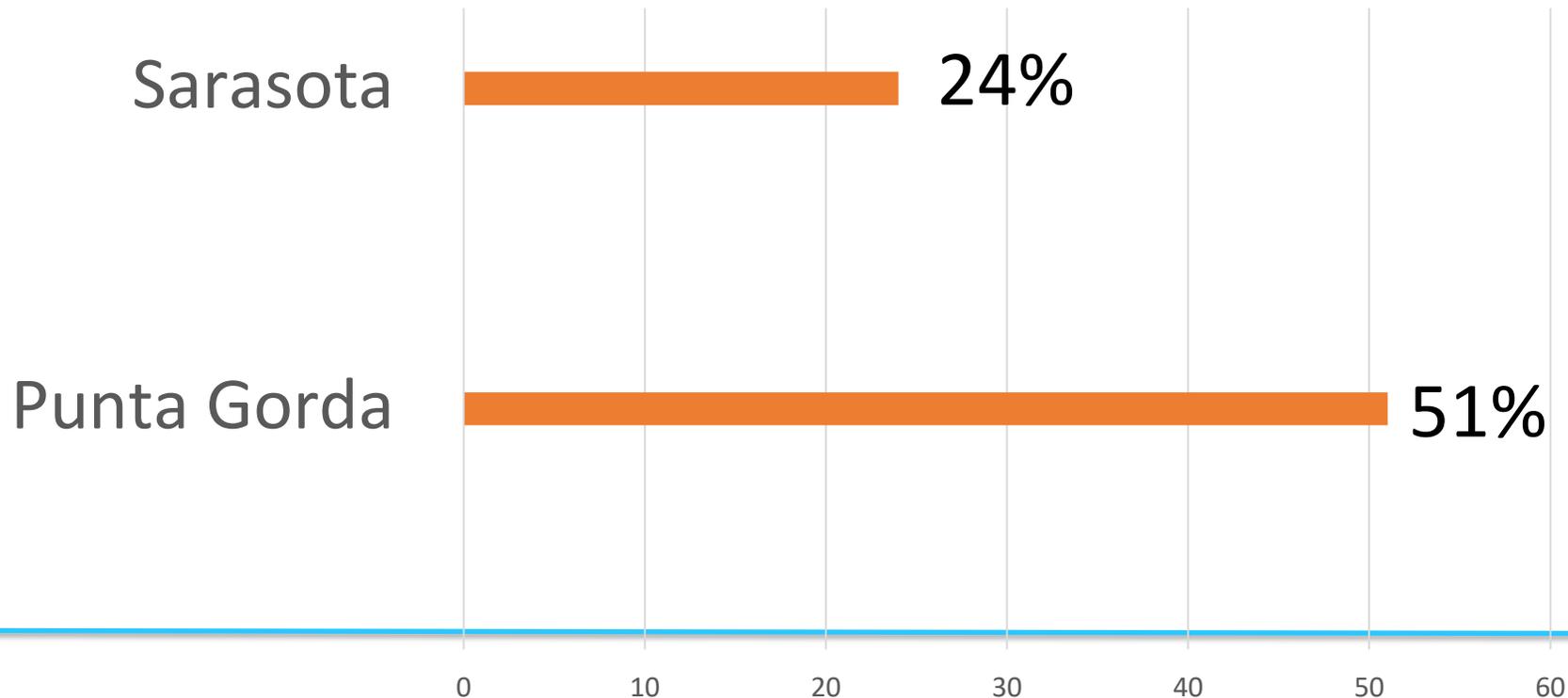
Kiplinger

STORE

DEALS

LOG IN

## Percentage of Population 65+



# Future Economic Growth Challenges



1:3

Births to Deaths

# Future Economic Growth Challenges

- Millennials Not Moving to Punta Gorda:
- No Strong Job Market
- No Growing Housing Market
- No Younger Generation to Replace Aging Population

# Future Economic Growth Challenges



- Fewer New Residents
- Lower Housing Demand
- Lower Housing Values
- Lower Property Tax Revenue

# Future Economic Growth Challenges



Punta Gorda  
FLORIDA

- Shrinking, Older Population
- Not Enough Future Younger Residents Moving In
- Lower Housing Demand → Lower Housing Prices
- 90% of city's future property tax revenues drop

# What Are Punta Gorda's Options

# What Are Punta Gorda's Future Options

- Raise Future Residential Property Taxes on Existing Homes
- Raise Future Fees for City Services
- Cut Future City Services

# What Are Punta Gorda's Future Options

- Take A Leadership Role Today to Grow the Tax Base Tomorrow

# What Are Punta Gorda's Options



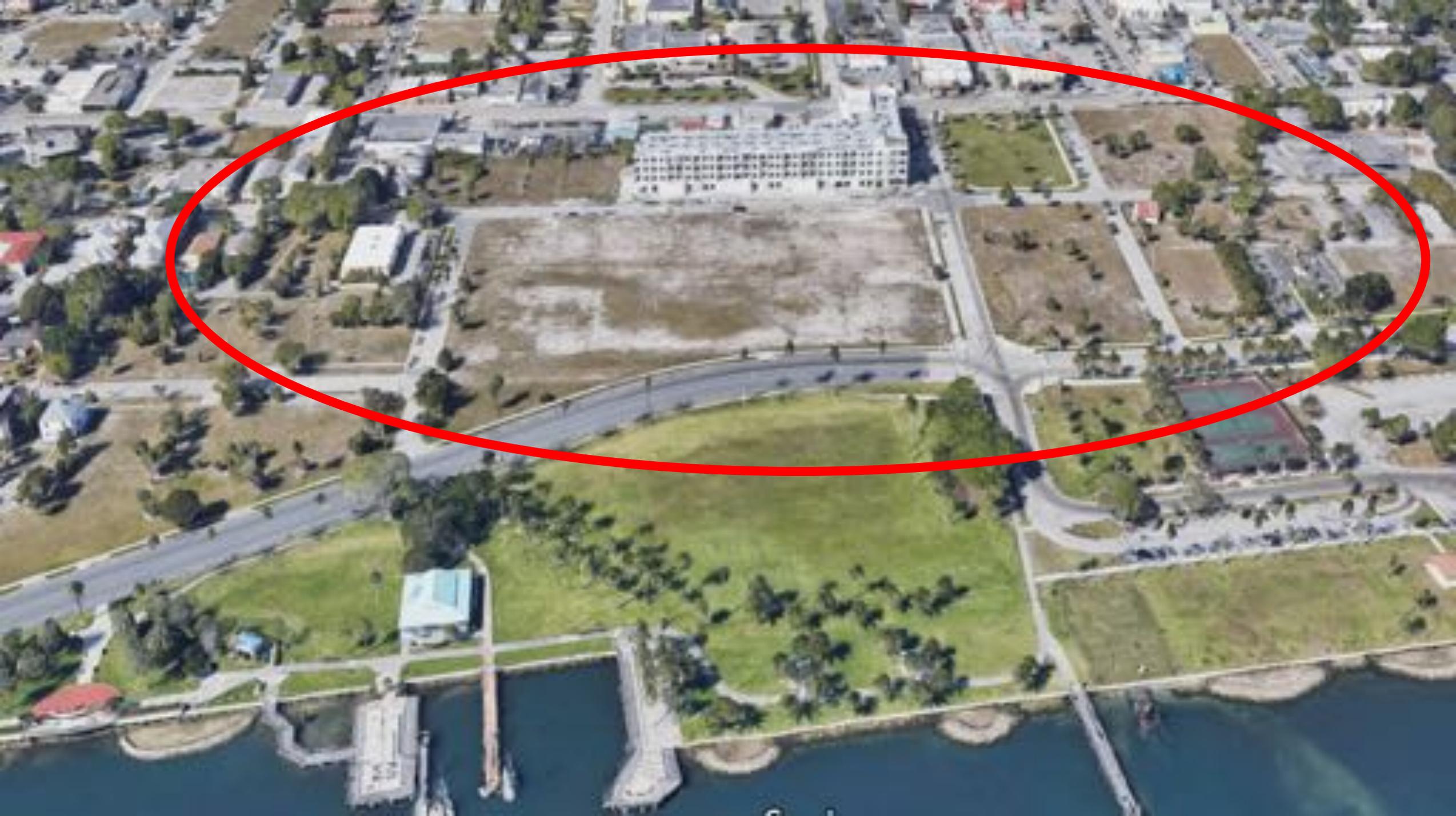
The best redevelopment projects are the result of progressive, forward thinking city leadership.

# What Are Punta Gorda's Options



The best redevelopment projects are the result of progressive, forward thinking city leadership.









# City is taking the lead



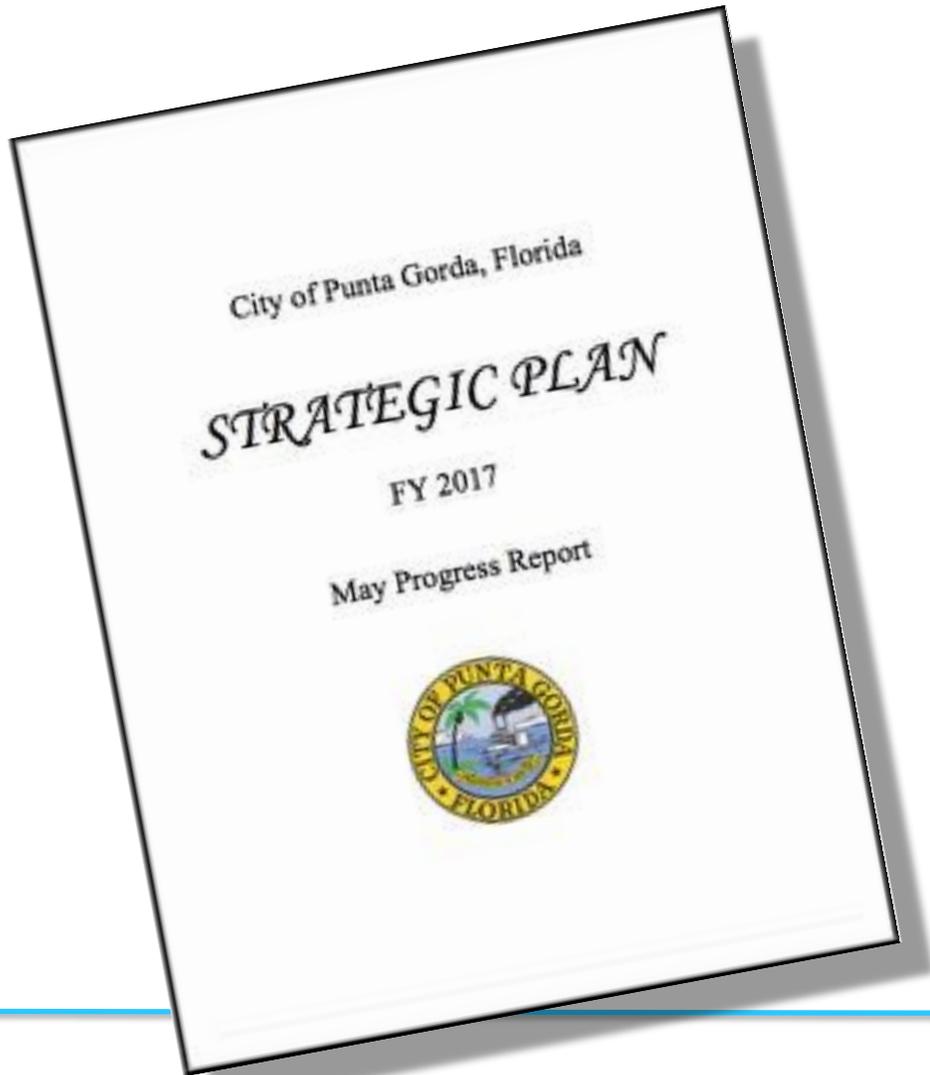
- Brand developed to enhance business attraction, retention, visitation, relocation, & economic growth.
- City Council voted unanimously to approve & adopt the brand.
- City adoption has begun.

# City is taking the lead

## City of Punta Gorda 2017 Strategic Plan:

*“...Strengthen & diversify the City’s tax base to increase the commercial base.”*

*“Support and facilitate the marketing of Punta Gorda’s assets as a core to a vibrant downtown”*



# City is taking the lead

- *Growth of the tax base is essential to Punta Gorda's future*
- *City leaders are taking the lead on the tough discussions:*
  - *Building Heights*

# City is taking the lead

**Charlotte Sun**   
An Edition of The Sun and weekly Herald

*“Relaxing building height restrictions in downtown Punta Gorda is vital to the city’s growth.... It needs to require the right kind of architecture. It needs to insist on the right development. But it needs to move forward. And for that to be accomplished, it must take a vertical leap.”*

# Addressing Criticism

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- *2005 Citizens Master Plan.*
- *Put taller buildings in Jones Loop Area.*
- *I like things the way they are now.*

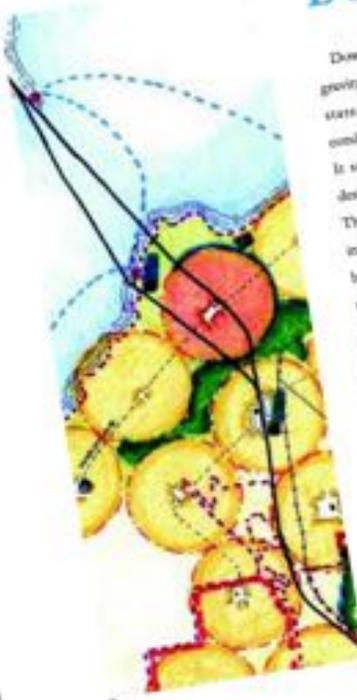
# 2005 CITIZENS MASTER PLAN



**TEAM** Punta Gorda  
Spring 2005

# Downtown Master Plan

- A. Downtown Master Plan
- B. Downtown region
- C. "Missing teeth" diagram



Downtown Punta Gorda is the center of gravity of the whole region. In its current state, however, the downtown is not conducive to a good pedestrian experience. It suffers from what is known in urban design as the "Missing Teeth Syndrome". This so-called "MTS syndrome" is found in cities where the relationship between building frontages and continuity of sidewalks is not parallel or consistent. In theory, the more continuous the building frontages along uninterrupted sidewalks, the more energy, livability, and aliveness the retail place will have; and vice versa,

the less continuous the building frontages along interrupted sidewalks, the more lethargic, dead, and unengaged it will be.

In Punta Gorda, an empirical observation of this relationship proves to be quite disturbing. The lack of consistency of the downtown building frontages near be inconsistent. Supportive land development regulations (LDR's) and architectural guidelines would encourage the production of pedestrian friendly urban buildings of the highest design quality.



## Historic District

### Historic District

The City of Punta Gorda has one of the most eclectic historic districts in Central Florida. Its historic importance encompasses more than one hundred years

of residential and civic experience. Nevertheless, the historic district is under severe stress of new construction incompatibility.

Under FEMA flood regulations, new

buildings must be raised to comply with Federal policies within flood areas. Therefore, the new Land Development Regulations must include design guidelines to avoid the production of the typical "mega-mansion on concrete piles" with





A Example of a downtown center of gravity

**Coordinated Leasing, Management, and Marketing:**

Although downtowns are not shopping centers, they do need to adopt the coordinated leasing, management, and marketing practices that make shopping centers successful. These practices have been translated and adapted by the National Main Street Program to serve downtowns where there are multiple property owners and merchants. The existing merchants associations, the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Punta Gorda should seriously consider creating a Main Street Program (MSP) and hiring a Manager to implement it.



**A Downtown Critical Mass of Retail and Center of Gravity:**

The most retail assembled in one place, the most attractive a destination becomes. This rule is the same for shopping centers, strip centers, and downtown areas. The greater the variety and concentration of retail, the larger the trade area becomes – the greater the distances people are willing to travel.

Larger trade areas bring more customers and create more successful retail. Fishermen's

Village, for instance, has succeeded because it has a concentration of retail shops and restaurants, a relatively attractive location, and a "brand name" image that lends itself to marketing. Many downtowns, however, do not take advantage of these opportunities. As a retail destination, downtown Punta Gorda could grow stronger with the addition, in quantity and quality, of shops, restaurants, arts and cultural activities, etc.

The first order of business should be the



# City is taking the lead

- *2005 Master Plan:*
  - *Time has proven the economics are not there.*
  - *Businesses have not opened.*
  - *This is not the same city it was 13 years ago.*

# What About Jones Loop?

- *Successful cities have only one vibrant urban core.*
- *Drain economic growth from downtown.*
- *Millennials are moving to urban downtowns.*

# I Like Things The Way They Are Now

- *Today, Punta Gorda is a wonderful place to live*
- *Today, Punta Gorda property values are high*
- *Today, there are enough people to sustain.*

# I Like Things The Way They Are Now

- *Leadership has a responsibility to take steps to look beyond today*
- *Making changes to encourage growth and economic development is about ensuring the future of Punta Gorda 10, 20, 50 years away.*

# Changing Heights Won't Diversify Taxes

- *Downtown projects are almost always mixed-use.*
- *Even majority residential development leads to diversified growth.*
- *Simple supply/demand. More people demand more services.*

# A City's Responsibility is to Lead

- *The private sector does things because they are profitable.*
- *Cities can do things because they are right.*
- *For over a decade, it has not been profitable to complete the redevelopment of downtown Punta Gorda.*

# A City's Responsibility is to Lead

- *Growth is inevitable. The issue is how and where.*
- *Leadership has a responsibility to protect the public interest.*
- *It is in the public interest to ensure that areas of the city that until now have sat vacant take advantage of future growth.*



Thank You.